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## OVERVIEW

The following policy details Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and private child placing agency requirements for maintaining case documentation regarding children and families receiving foster care services.

## DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to this policy only.

**Electronic case record:** all information and documents related to a case that are stored electronically in the Michigan Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (MiSACWIS).

**Physical case file:** all hard copy documents stored in a physical file. For cases serviced by a private child placing agency contracted by MDHHS, this would include physical files at the MDHHS local office and the private child placing agency office.

## CASE DOCUMENTATION

Case documentation must be maintained for all children who are:

- Committed to the department.
- Placed by court order and supervised by the department.
- Out-of-town inquiry (OTI) cases; see the Interstate Compact Manual (ICM) 100-170 and [FOM 722-14, Courtesy Supervision](#).
- Placed voluntarily in an alternative placement for which department funds are being disbursed or for whom services are provided.

**Exception:** Adoption medical subsidy cases.

**MDHHS and private child placing agencies must maintain all case documentation in the child's electronic case record in MiSACWIS.**

MDHHS and private child placing agencies must upload documentation according to the guidelines in the MiSACWIS Job Aid: Uploading Documents. This job aid can be found by logging into MiSACWIS, clicking Help & Training > MiSACWIS Communications Website > Documents and Forms.

Prior to upload in MiSACWIS, MDHHS and private child placing agencies must ensure all content from the paper document is visible and legible in the scanned image.

In addition to maintaining case documentation in MiSACWIS, some case documentation must also remain in hard copy in the physical case file, as noted below.

For additional requirements for juvenile justice cases, see [JJ2 255, Case Record Requirements](#).

For additional requirements for Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) cases, see [NAA 225, Case Record](#).

### Documentation Completed in MiSACWIS

MDHHS and private child placing agencies must maintain all forms, reports, assessments, and other documentation completed by MDHHS or the private child placing agency in MiSACWIS.

MDHHS and private child placing agencies must generate **and save** all finalized documents. Saving a document in MiSACWIS preserves the document's content at the time of generation.

**Note:** Draft documents generated for supervisor review or corrections do not need to be saved until corrections are made and the document is finalized.

#### ***Completed in MiSACWIS***

Forms, reports, assessments, and other documents completed in MiSACWIS do not need to be maintained in the physical case file after they have been generated and saved in MiSACWIS.

- The full document does not need to be scanned and uploaded if it is generated entirely from data elements contained in MiSACWIS.
- If a signature page is present, the signed signature page must be scanned and uploaded to MiSACWIS and maintained in the physical case file.

***Completed or Modified Outside of MiSACWIS***

Forms, reports, assessments, and other documentation completed outside of MiSACWIS must have the full document uploaded to MiSACWIS.

- **This includes documents which are partially completed and generated in MiSACWIS but also contain information that was added or modified after generation of the document.**
- MDHHS and private child placing agencies must ensure signatures are present on the uploaded document, if applicable, and the signature page must be maintained in the physical case file.

**Education and Employment**

Education and employment documentation for children under MDHHS care and supervision must be scanned and uploaded to MiSACWIS. All education and employment documentation must be returned to the youth or caregiver no later than case closure.

**Financial**

All financial documents must be scanned and uploaded to MiSACWIS **and** a hard copy must be maintained in the physical case file.

**Legal Documents**

All legal documentation must be scanned and uploaded to MiSACWIS **and** a hard copy must be maintained in the physical case file. Examples include:

- Court orders.
- Petitions (initial, amended, and supplemental).
- Motions.
- DHS-3813, Request for Assistance/Voluntary Foster Care.

**Medical and Mental/Behavioral Health**

Medical and mental/behavioral health documentation for children under MDHHS care and supervision must be maintained in

accordance with [FOM 801, Health Services for Children in Foster Care](#) and [FOM 803, Medicaid - Foster Care](#).

Medical and mental/behavioral health documentation for adult case members must be scanned and uploaded to MiSACWIS. After upload to MiSACWIS, these documents may be destroyed.

### **Vital Records, Photographs, and Mementos**

MDHHS and private child placing agencies must scan and upload vital records, photographs, and mementos into MiSACWIS and maintain them in the physical case file until case closure. Examples include:

- Birth certificate.
- Social Security card.
- Photographs of the child and/or family members.
- Letters from biological parents.

Upon case closure, MDHHS or the private child placing agency must return these documents to the:

- Legal parent(s), if the case closes after reunification or the death of a temporary ward.
- Adoptive parent(s), if the case closes due to adoption.
- Youth, if the child is age 18 or older at the time of case closure.
- Legal guardian(s), if the case closes after the child has been placed in a guardianship.

**Note:** In the event of case closure due to the death of a Michigan Children's Institute (MCI) ward, these documents should be maintained in the physical case file.

### **RECORD RETENTION**

For information on record retention, see [FOM 722-15, Case Closing](#).

**POLICY CONTACT**

Questions about this policy item should be emailed to the [Child Welfare Policy](#) mailbox.

**LEGAL AUTHORITY****State**

*Records Reproduction Act, 1992 PA 116, as amended, MCL 24.401 et seq.*

*Executive Reorganization Order, E.R.O. No. 2009-26, MCL 399.752*

**Child Placing  
Agency**

*Mich Admin Code, R 400.12422*

*Mich Admin Code, R 400.12509*